

# ‘Forgotten memorial’ visited during Utah ceremony



PHAA Ben Glass photo

A Marine 1st Lieutenant plays “Amazing Grace” on the bagpipes during the USS Utah Memorial sunset service. Survivors and their guests floated by on a Navy white boat.

**JO2 Jim Williams**  
*Editor*

On Dec.6, 2001, the eve of the 60th anniversary of the Pearl Harbor attack, 10 USS Utah survivors alongside their families and friends returned in a Navy white boat to

Ford Island for a special sunset memorial service held to honor those who lost their lives aboard the Utah. Sometimes referred to as the “forgotten memorial”, due to its secluded location and being overshadowed by the popular Arizona Memorial, the re-

mains of USS Utah can be seen off the north shore of Ford Island, partially sticking out of the water, beside a monument and concrete pier constructed in 1972, dedicated to mark where the battleship went down. But the Navy has not for-

gotten the Utah. An American flag is raised daily at the USS Utah memorial to honor the 54 Sailors still entombed in the ship. Also still in the ship are the ashes of Nancy Lynne Wagner, a baby girl who had died earlier. Yeoman Chief Albert Thomas Dewitt Wagner, her father, was aboard the ship when it went down. While he survived the attack, her ashes, which he had planned to bury at sea later that month, were still aboard when the ship sank. One of the special guest speakers at the memorial service was Mary Kreigh, the surviving twin of Nancy Lynne Wagner. “I could not ask for anything better than for her to be tenderly and carefully looked after by America’s finest- the U.S. Navy,” she said. A total of six officers and 52 enlisted men died during the Dec. 7th attack. But only four bodies were recovered from the ship. Thirty officers and 431 enlisted survived that fateful day. The Utah was originally commissioned as a battleship in 1911 and recommissioned in 1932 as a target vessel. It is speculated that its wooden reinforced decks may have given it the appearance of an aircraft carrier from the air to the Japanese pilots as the at-

tacked Pearl Harbor. As the sun slowly set, some of the survivors and their family members read the names of all those who died on the Utah 60 years earlier as a Navy brass bell rang out across the harbor in their honor. Engineman Master Chief Robert Scheeler served as master of ceremonies for the service. “In my 27 and a half years with the Navy, this is the greatest honor that I have ever received,” he said to the guests. “To stand before you and represent these fine gentlemen who are left from the Utah. I salute each and every one of you.” “Amazing Grace” was played on the bagpipes on the distant pier though out the service as words were reverently spoken about the ship and its crew. Afterwards the hymn “Softly and Tenderly” was quietly sung bringing tears to many. But when two buglers began to play “echo-taps” and the color guard lowered the flag on the pier, not another sound could be heard anywhere in the area. The boat eventually returned to shore, but not before the guests tossed orchids into the harbor offering one last tribute before the sun completely set and the service was over.

## USS Nevada survivors travel historical path

**JO2 Daniel J. Calderon**  
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On Dec. 7. 2001, around 20 survivors from USS Nevada, and their guests re-traced the path that battleship took the morning of December 7, 1941. DKC (ret) Woody Derby, president of the USS Nevada Association coordinated the reunion. On the morning of the attack, Nevada was moored just off Ford Island. Her mooring location gave the ship a greater maneuverability than the other 8 battleships moored along ‘battleship row.’ While the Japanese warplanes strafed, bombed and torpedoed the ships in the harbor, gunners aboard Nevada opened fire and engineers got up steam. Nevada was struck by one torpedo and two, possibly three, bombs from the Japanese attackers, but managed to get underway. While attempting to leave Pearl Harbor, Nevada was struck again, causing Nevada’s commanding officer to run the ship

aground at Hospital Point because he feared it might sink in the channel, blocking it. 50 men were killed in the attack and 109 were wounded. A Navy tour boat shuttled the survivors and their guests from the Nevada mooring quay into the channel and cruised along the same route they traveled 60 years before. As the point the ship was beached, they scatted the ashes of a former shipmate in a solemn moment. After the ceremony, the tour boats tied up at Charlie Point, near the site of the memorial plaque. The survivors made their way along the streets of Hospital Point, where Sailors lined the streets and rendered honors as the former Nevada Sailors passed. There, wives of commanding officers of ships home-ported at Pearl Harbor and the Hospital Point o’hana had set up a reception for the survivors. The Pacific Fleet Brass Quintet played for the reception.



PH2 Jacobawitz

A USS Nevada survivor throws a wreath into the harbor in memory of those who perished Dec. 7, 1941.

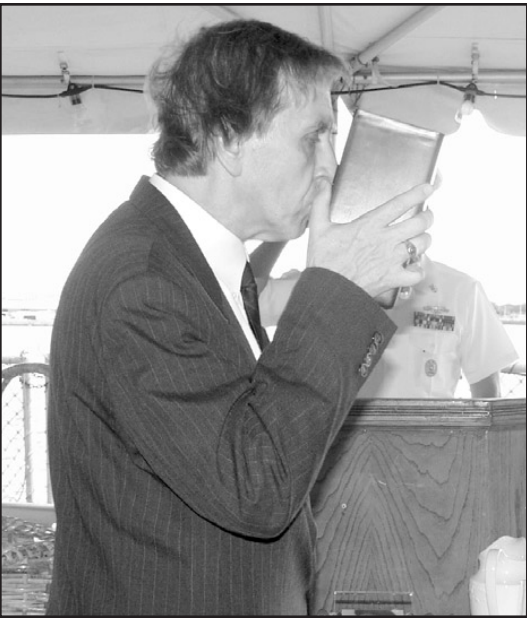
## Survivor returns to harbor waters for eternal resting

**JO3 Tim Walsh**  
*Staff Writer*

The placid waters of Pearl Harbor welcomed the return of a survivor after 60 years since the attack that took so many lives and marked the lives of so many more. During a ceremony aboard the Battleship Missouri Dec. 5, the remains of Walter J. Lutenegger were committed to the harbor. Lutenegger survived the attack but left Dec. 7, 1941 a changed man who carried the weight of that fateful day with him for the rest of his life. Lutenegger served aboard USS Oklahoma (BB 37) on the morning of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Rear Adm. Robert T. Conway Jr., Commander Navy Region Hawaii and Commander Naval Surface Group

Middle Pacific, gave Walter Lutenegger’s eulogy. “In Walter’s closing words, ‘I would not have chosen to have gone through the war, nor would I care to repeat it. However, I would not take a million dollars for my experiences with my crewmate’,” concluded Conway nearing the end of the eulogy. In attendance to the ceremony was Lutenegger’s son, Bryan Alexander. “My father was forever effected by what happened here during the attack. The things that he did are things that make me proud, proud to bring him back to rest with the men he served with,” said Alexander of his father experiences and of returning him to Pearl Harbor. On the morning of the attack, USS Oklahoma was moored outboard of USS Maryland (BB 46). Japanese pilots tar-

geted the ship and three aerial torpedoes hit the Oklahoma causing a severe opening of the port side. Soon after the Oklahoma was hit, it rolled and sank to the bottom of the harbor with more than 400 crew aboard. The rescue efforts the followed saved 32 crewmembers trapped within the capsized Oklahoma. In the years following the attack, a massive salvage effort attempted to recover the ship for use in the war effort, but the ship was too badly damaged and old to return to the fleet. After being stripped of its guns and other useful equipment, USS Oklahoma was decommissioned in September 1944. Moore Drydock Company purchased the ship in December 1946 but sank 1947 while being towed to San Francisco from Pearl Harbor.



PH2 Amon photo

Bryan Alexander embraces his father’s ashes before committing them to the harbor.